

THE
NECESSITY and BEAUTY
^K
OF 8
FAMILY-RELIGION
Represented in a
Short, but pathetick ADDRESS
TO THE
P R O F E S S O R.

JER. x. 25. *Pour out thy Fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not on thy Name.*

EPH. v. 1. *Be ye Followers of God as dear Children.*

EPH. vi. 4. *Bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord.*



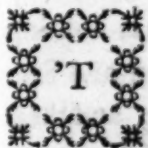
L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN ROBINSON, at the *Globe and Bible*, at *Dock-Head*, Southwark; and THOMAS FIELD, at the *Wheat-Sheaf*, the Corner of *Pater-noster-Row*. 1754.

THE
NATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MUSEUM
TO THE
PROFESSOR



THE NECESSITY and BEAUTY OF FAMILY-RELIGION.

 WAS a noble Resolution which *Joshua* made;
As for me and my House, we will serve the Lord.
Josh. xxiv. 15. How happy would it be, if this
 pious Resolution was adopted by every Master
 of a Family in our *British Israel*? But, *alás!* we have the
 Form of Godliness, and but little of the Power. Many
 are publick Enemies to our dear *Emanuel*; their Lips and
 Lives being incontestable Proofs of it. Others content them-
 selves with a splendid Profession, and, like the Jews of old,
 with a flaming Zeal cry out, The Temple of the Lord,
 the Temple of the Lord are we; but follow them home to
 their Families, and you will find there a grand Deficiency;
 a Deficiency of so important a Nature, that it is not fit to
 be named. *Oh tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the Streets*
of Askelon. Here's a Professor, one that is fond of the
 Christian Name; one that appears to detest the common
 Pollutions of the World; frequents worshipping Assem-
 blies; entertains Hopes of everlasting Happiness; and yet
 lives without *Family-Religion*, and pleads for an Excuse
 his Want of Ability for such sacred Duties, or that he has
 no Time to attend to them. To thee, O sleepy Professor,
 would I address myself, in the most affectionate, yet solemn
 Manner, upon this important Subject, and ask thee a few
 Questions; a due Consideration of which will outweigh all
 thy Objections, and leave thee without Excuse.—

I. Where's thy Zeal for Christ, and Concern to honour him? Unless we walk consistently with our Character, we cannot be said to adorn the Doctrine of God our Savi-

our. Is it not expected from one that names the sacred Name of Christ, that he not only depart from all Iniquity, walk suitably to his Profession in the World, but that he does the same in his Family? But here's a Professor that waits upon God regularly in his Ordinances, and gives all the publick Evidences of a Christian indeed; discovers perhaps a becoming Zeal for the great Doctrines of Christianity, and contends for the Faith once delivered to the Saints: But see, when he comes to his Family, he is struck with a sudden Silence, has lost his Zeal, and has nothing to say either to God, or for him. His Children and Servants are brought up Strangers to *Family-Religion*; and their degenerate Natures will soon lead them to despise it, to represent it as unnecessary, and to conclude, that Religion is nothing more than an outward Form, or a mere waiting upon God on the Lord's Day.—Oh Christian! (for I would fain yet call thee so) my Soul mourns for thee! What, hast thou Zeal enough to oppose the Entrance of every pernicious Error into the Church, and not enough to set up and carry on Religion in thy Family? Oh that I could persuade thee to it! Remember how much the Eyes of thy dear little ones and Servants are fixed upon thee, how narrowly they often inspect thy Conduct, and take their Ideas of Religion from what they observe in thee. And oh! shall a Servant in thine House have an Occasion offered him from thy Negligence to blaspheme that sacred Name by which thou art called? Hast thou nothing to say for thy divine Saviour? Dost thou with an apparent Concern lament in publick a languishing Religion? and wilt thou not attempt a Revival in thy Family, but by a criminal Cowardice of Spirit, or careless Behaviour, lead thine Household to think lightly of the Cause of the exalted Jesus, and to slight his glorious Person and Salvation? I would not think hardly of thee, as if thou hadst no Zeal for Christ, or Concern for his Interest: For have I not seen thee attending where the pure Ordinances are administered? Have I not heard thee contending for the peculiar Glories of Christianity? Have I

not been frequently a Witness of thy Liberality for the Support of the Gospel? And what does all this bespeak, but a Concern for our Lord? I would gladly hope well of thee; but I must be faithful to tell thee the Inconsistency there is between thy publick and private Walk.—What a Beauty in Family Order! See a Christian walking with his Family in the Fear of the Lord from Day to Day, and like *Abraham*, that venerable Father, commanding his Children and his Household after him! Here's an *Israelite* indeed! What an Harmony, an Uniformity, in all his Conduct! Inspired with a Zeal for his dearest Redeemer, he is not content to appear publicly for him, but makes his House a little *Bethel*, a School to train up his Children and Servants in the various important Branches of Christianity, and to fit them for standing up for the noblest of all Causes in a degenerate Day.

II. Where's thy Love for thy dear Children, and Concern for their everlasting Welfare? To call in question thy Tenderness for thy Children would be highly offensive to thee, and, perhaps, awaken thy Resentment. But oh! what can I say? I would stretch my Charity as far as can be consistently done. But what can I say, when I see thee neglecting the Souls of thy Children? Thou art gratifying their Appetites with every Delicacy, clothing their Bodies in costly Silks, and pleasing their extravagant Fancies with every Thing they desire: I see thee weeping over them when afflicted, thy Bowels yearning with Pity: I find thee full of Anxiety about their Settlement in this Life, and giving all the Signs of a fond indulgent Parent; and who can, who would say, thou dost not love them? But oh! is this all the Affection thou canst shew for thy tender Offspring? Hast thou forgot thy poor Children have Souls, immortal Souls? Hast thou not yet considered that they must stand before the Bar of God, and that, if out of Christ, they must perish for ever? Does not this awaken thy Attention? Canst thou bear the Thought of their being separated from God, and their dwelling for ever with devouring Fire? What, these little Parts of thyself tore from thy fondest Embraces here,
and

and thrown into the Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimstone ! The Thought is too much to bear. It moves every tender Passion of thy Soul, and is too painful to endure a Moment. And why then so negligent ? How canst thou spend thy Days, and Months, and Years, and never examine them as to their everlasting State, instruct them in the great Doctrines of Christianity, pray with them, and teach them by thy Example the great Importance of Religion ? Come and view the bleeding Heart, see the wounded Spirit, hear the melancholy Groans of pious *David* on the sudden Removal of his beloved *Absalom*, and learn the Affection of a Parent. Observe his Conduct at the awful Tidings. Follow the mourning Saint to his Chamber. See, he weeps ; and, as he goes, he cries, with all the Brokenness of Heart, *Oh my Son Absalom, my Son, my Son Absalom ; would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my Son, my Son.* 2 Sam. xviii.

33. What occasioned such overwhelming Sorrow, but the Fear of *Absalom's* Miscarriage, the awful Thought of his dying unacquainted with God ? And oh ! may not this be thy Case ? Whenever the mournful Scene appears, thou wilt have a double Pain, if thou art sensible at all. The Doubt about the everlasting Welfare of thy Child will not only affect thee, but a View of thy Negligence will be like Darts sticking in thy Heart, and force from thee these sad Reflections.—“ Oh ! what have I been doing ? My dear, my tender Child has been suddenly tore from me ; and what Hopes have I of his everlasting Happiness ? Have I acted the Part of a Parent to him ? When did I expostulate with him about his Soul ? When did I pray with him, weep over him, and beseech him to consider the Things that belong to his everlasting Peace ? Oh cruel, hard-hearted Parent ! now he's gone, (and if out of Christ) gone beyond the Reach of Mercy and the Sound of Salvation for ever.”—Oh ! my dear Reader, art thou a Father, a Parent, and do not the Souls of thy Children lie near thy Heart ? Did I know in what Manner to address thee to melt thy Soul, convince thee of thy Duty, and stir thee up to it, I would do it.

III. Where's thy Consideration of that important Day, when thou must give an Account of thy Conduct as a Master and a Parent? The greater our Charge, the more it should awaken our Attention; and, if we act rationally, the more careful we are to discharge the important Trust reposed in us. Every one of thy Family is under thy Care. As Servants are to be found faithful in the Discharge of their Duty to thee in Temporals, so art thou to inquire into and promote their Spirituals. Thou hast One who is thy Master, who will say one Day to thee, Give an Account of thy Stewardship. And what, does the important Thought never startle thee? Is not this enough to remove all thy Objections of Modesty, Want of Time, &c.? What more solemn than to appear before God, who knows all thy Neglects, and keeps an exact Account of all thy Behaviour? Art thou ashamed of Christ and his Religion in thy Family? and oh! may not he be ashamed of thee in the Day when thou shalt appear before his Tribunal? May he not justly say, Oh! thou slothful and unprofitable Servant, thou almost Christian, thou hadst no more than a Name to live, notwithstanding all thy Show, thy outward Zeal: I set thee over a Family, gave thee Children and Servants: But see thy Negligence: Shame prevented the Discharge of thy Duty, and the Cares of Life eat up thy Time, and none was left for me and my Cause; Go into outer Darkness, where is nothing but Weeping, Wailing, and Gnashing of Teeth. 'Tis to be feared, this will be the Case with many who are Strangers to *Family-Religion*. And oh! I would be jealous of thee; oh! may it never be thine. Tremble for Fear of that Day. Put it not at a Distance: 'Tis a coming. Every Hour brings it nearer: And when it comes, there's no escaping. Think, oh! think, how awful, under the sad Alarms of Conscience, and under a dreadful Consciousness of Negligence, &c. to enter an eternal World, and go to the supreme Judge!—

Upon the whole, let me persuade thee, oh Professor! to set up Religion in thy Family, Let me desire thee, for the Lord Jesus Christ's Sake, for the Honour of that Name by
which

which thou art called ; let me beseech thee, if thou hast any
 Respect for thy own Peace in Life and Death; if thou hast
 any Love for thy Children, any Concern for their everlasting
 Happiness; let me charge thee, if thou hast any Sense
 or Thought of what it is to appear before God, and to give
 an Account of thy Stewardship, to set up *Family-Religion*.
 I would advise thee as a Friend, I would exhort thee as a
 Minister, I would intreat thee with all the Tenderness, the
 Bowels of a Parent, to act in thy Family like a Father, like
 a Master, like a Christian. Oh! in the Name of Christ I
 would call upon thee; in the Names of thy long-neglected
 Servants I would beg thy Pity; in the Names of thy tender
 Offspring I would move thee to Compassion; nay, let
 me personate even thy own Soul, and exhort thee to attend
 to thy Duty: But, after all, shall I not prevail? Wilt thou
 still make Objections? Will not Christ, nor Children, nor
 Servants, nor thy own Soul, thy own Peace prevail? Oh,
 God forbid! I cannot let thee go: I would fain melt thy
 Heart, convince thee of thy Duty, and quicken thee to it.
 Oh! methinks I see thee struck with Conviction, and hear
 thee crying out in the following broken but pathetick Man-
 ner: " Dear Lord, I stand self-condemned. Oh, what a
 Professor have I been!—Thy Love has at last won me.—
 Oh, my dear Children, what a Parent have I been! Reason,
 sufficient Reason have you to reflect upon your Father,
 and call him cruel amidst all his fond Indulgencies.—My
 poor Servants have been faithful to me, but how unmindful
 of their immortal Concerns!—But, above all, my Redeemer
 may justly complain, and say, Where's thy Love, thy Zeal
 for me? Lord, let me live no longer in such ungrateful,
 cruel Negligence, but come and quicken me; leave me not,
 till thou hast made me all Obedience."—Thus, oh thus,
 would I gladly leave thee, oh my dearest Reader. May
 God give his Blessing to the above imperfect Hints. To
 him I commit both them and thee.

